

[Early Life of Elizabeth Garrett]

Redfield George B. Interview (?)

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Comanche Indians On Chisum Cattle-Trail

(In own words of Sallie Chisum Roberts and) (Lucius Dills-Roswell Historian.)

"In 1867 John S. Chisum brought his first herd of "Jingle Bob" cattle across the plains and thro'ugh the buffalo hunting territory of the hostile nomadic Comanche Indians.

" Scout riders, were sent ahead by the trail-blazers to protect the herd from the Indians who were numerous in the lower Pecos Valley until after the extermination of the buffalo during the years 1877-78. The "Jingle Bobs" were brought over safely and placed on grazing lands around headquarters established at Bosque Grande thirty-five miles northeast of Roswell, on the Pecos River. A younger brother Pitser M. Chisum was placed in charge."

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In 1932 the writer of this article was one of the "Old Timers" who rode in the Old Timers parade in Roswell. Mrs. Sallie Chisum Roberts riding a side-saddle and wearing her long old fashioned riding habit was an interesting and outstanding figure of that parade.

On this day, at the end of "The Trail" Mrs. Roberts told again the story, we all loved to hear, of her experiences on the journey and after arrival in the Pecos Valley, and the first night spent on the Chisum Ranch.

"It was fifty-five years ago, this next December 24th. 1932, since I arrived in the Pecos Valley", said Mrs. Roberts. "We went to Uncle Johns Chisum's ranch five[.?] 2 miles south of here. Uncle John was known as the "Cattle King" of the west but that had no effect on our equilibrium.

"My Uncle John never married. My father" (James Chisum) "my two brothers" (Walter and William) "and I left home in Texas and traveled thro'ugh the open country expecting Indians attacks at any time. We had three wagons, a hack and our saddle horses. We spent one month on the road. We had packed all the fruit trees, flowers and shrubbery we could in the wagons, and they were the beginning of the first Pecos Valley orchards and flowers." Some of the plants from tho'se old fashioned roses brought over the plains by Sallie Chisum still flourish and bloom on the Redfield place 705 E. College Boulevard in Roswell.

"Our last night on the trail we spent at the R. M. Gilbert ranch on the Ponasco River", said Mrs. Roberts.

"Six cow boys had been sent by Uncle John to meet us at Horsehead Crossing to act as bodyguards, and protect our stock from Indian attack, at night. The first night we spent at the Chisum ranch, we were all tired out. We put our stock in the fenced in lot, locked the gate and all hands went to bed and slept soundly. The next morning we were amazed to find the stock all gone, and the gate still locked. The Indians," (Comanches) "had lifted

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the gate from it's iron pivots removed all our stock replaced the gate very carefully and had completely disappeared, leaving only thier tracks to tell the tale. We could not tell how many 3 Indians were in the raiding. They got twenty-five horses and mules. I was heartsick for we had left our home at Denton Texas to get away from Indians. "Cheer up Sallie, the worst is yet to come' said my father.

I know he was right when I first saw Roswell. There was only one residence called a 'hotel' and one store which contained the Post Office. These two buildings had been built in 1869 by Van C. Smith and Aaron O. Wilburn on the block west of where the Court House stands at the present time. In [?] the post office was stationed here with Van Smith appointed as postmaster. He named the town Roswell for his father Roswell Smith of Omaha Nebraska. There were six little trees trying to grow on the west side of the main road. On the east side there were a few houses some made of adobe and some of just mud, sticks, and gunny sacks. It was a cheerless looking [street?] and I said to Brother Walter, 'this is the Jumping off place I want to go back home.' " The request of his sister to return to her home in Denton Texas was repeated to this writer in [?] 1905 by Walter Chisum as we walked thro'ugh his beautiful orchard near the old Chisum Ranch at South Spring. It is needless to say the Chisums stayed in the Pecos Valley, and they are responsible for many of the beauty spots in and around Roswell which have caused this district to be called, "The Oasis In The Desert."

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